

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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R 081225Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9015

INFO AMEMBASSY BERN

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, SZ

SUBJ: MORE ON DIPLOMATS' RECALL

REF: TEHRAN 8922

1. MUTUAL RECALL OF IRANIAN AND SWISS DIPLOMATS (REFTEL)
WAS BACK IN HEADLINES AGAIN SEPTEMBER 8 IN TEHRAN. FOREIGN
MINISTRY'S DIRGEN FOR INFORMATION SALEHI CALLED PRESS
CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 7 TO REFUTE "FALSE ALLEGATIONS" OF
SECRETARY GENERAL OF SWISS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE PAYOT
CHARGING THAT RECALLED IRANIAN DIPLOMAT MALEK-MAHDAVI HAD
BEEN ENGAGED IN ESPIONAGE AND THAT WITHDRAWAL OF GOI
SUIT IN SWISS COURT AGAINST STUDENTS WHO OCCUPIED IRANIAN
CONSULATE INDICATED GOI DID NOT HAVE LEGITIMATE CASE. ON
FIRST POINT, SALEHI ASSERTED MALEK-MAHDAVI HAD BEEN ASSIGNED
PRIMARY DUTY OF PROTECTING IRANIAN DIGNITARIES VISITING
SWITZERLAND, HAD BEEN IN CONSTANT TOUCH WITH SWISS SECURITY
OFFICIALS, AND GOI HAD NEVER HIDDEN NATURE OF HIS MISSION.
SALEHI STRONGLY DENIED MALEK-MAHDAVI HAD EVER BEEN INVOLVED
IN SECRET INTELLIGENCE.

2. SALEHI SAID DECISION TO WITHDRAW COURT SUIT DID NOT
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MEAN GOI WAS NOT CONVINCED OF CORRECTNESS OF ITS CASE

UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW WHICH HOLDS HOST GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR PROTECTION OF CONSULAR PERSONNEL, BUT HE DID NOT EXPLAIN GOI REASONS FOR WITHDRAWING CASE. HE CHARGED SWISS HAD FAILED TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE PROTECTION AGAINST "UNDESIRABLE ELEMENTS" WHICH OCCUPIED CONSULATE, MANHANDLED STAFF AND STOLE MONEY AND PROPERTY, HAD FAILED TO TAKE ANY ACTION AGAINST CULPRITS AND HAD ALLOWED THEM TO LEAVE COUNTRY FREELY.

3. SWISS AMBASSADOR WETTERWALD ADMITTED TO AMBASSADOR SEPTEMBER 7 THAT SWISS HAD GOTTEN SELVES INTO VERY COMPLICATED LEGAL SITUATION AND IT WOULD PROBABLY BE SOME TIME BEFORE THEY COULD STRAIGHTEN IT OUT. PART OF PROBLEM WAS DUE TO FEDERAL SYSTEM WHICH ALLOWED GENEVA CANTON TO PURSUE PAROCHIAL INTERESTS WITHOUT REGARD TO INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS. SINCE INCIDENT THERE HAS BEEN ABSOLUTELY NO MOVEMENT IN ECONOMIC AFFAIRS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES AND MEETING OF JOINT TRADE COMMITTEE HAS BEEN POSTPONED.
HELMS

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NNN

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